

# Salute to Veterans

In recognition of Veterans Day  
November 11, 2020

The Wilmington  
**Rotary**  
Club



## Veterans share their histories of military service

In advance of Veterans Day 2019, members of the Wilmington Rotary Club were asked to describe their time in the

armed service and comment on what it meant to them. Here are their answers, with 2020 updates from new members.

### Larry Anderson

**Maryland U.S. Army National Guard  
Specialist 5th Class**



I served in the Maryland Army National Guard from 1965 to 1971. I started with the 29th Infantry Division, a high-priority unit during the Vietnam War, where I was a member of a rifle platoon. During the last

year and a half of my service time, our company became part of the 729 Maintenance Battalion. My final job was serving as an accounting specialist in charge of controlling the company's inventory programs.



### Joseph F. Augustine

**U.S. Army, Private First Class**



My education at UNC Chapel Hill was interrupted when I enlisted in the United States Army. I was sent to Medical and Surgical Tech School at Fort Sam Houston. Upon completion of the requirements, I became a member of the Medical Corps. I was sent to the 98th General Hospital in Munich, Germany and was in the WWII Army Occupation. For 14 months as a physical

therapy instructor, my duties were to help rehabilitate injured soldiers. At that time Munich was 95% destroyed from the bombings and had not been reconstructed. My ability to speak fluently in German gave me a unique opportunity to get to know the local people of Munich.

Later, I was a major in the Civil Air Patrol as well as commander of the Chapel Hill Civil Air Patrol. I was the pilot on many NC missions where we searched for missing civilian and military aircraft.



**Editor's note:** This publication's first edition was created in coordination with the club's float in the 2019 Veterans Day parade. Our tribute to the club's veterans has been updated, even though the 2020 parade has been canceled.

**Scott Betz**  
**U.S. Navy,**  
**Petty Officer Second Class**



I served in the United States Navy from 1970 to 1979. I was stationed aboard the USS *John F Kennedy*, CV-67, for three and a half cruises. For two and a half cruises I was a member of Attack Squadron VA-72 where I worked on the jets' radar and bombing computers. For my final

cruise I was a member of ship's company. It was an incredible time in my life. The experiences and places I traveled shaped my adult life. I was honorably discharged and am still proud of my service to our country.



**Ken Bishop**  
**U.S. Army, Corporal**



I was drafted into the U.S. Army January 21, 1953. I was sent to Camp Gordon in Georgia, where I was placed into the Signal Corps. I completed my basic training plus six weeks of radio repair. After my training I went to Camp Loeder in Salzburg, Austria. This is a beautiful city,

divided by the Salzach River. I worked in a small house on a mountain with Morse Code and teletype equipment. I worked with the teletype equipment keeping the signals 5/5, which went downtown to the crypto guys. I received an honorable discharge as a corporal on December 21, 1954.



**Henry Brown**  
**U.S. Army, Major**



I graduated from the Virginia Military Institute with a BS in civil engineering in June, 1960. I received a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army on June 14, 1960. I was assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia and graduated from the Officers Basic Program. I was subsequently assigned to Fort Jackson, S.C., where I served as commander of a basic

training company. In 1961, I was assigned to serve as post engineer at Fort Jackson based on my engineering background. I subsequently applied for and received a branch transfer to the Army Corps of Engineers. I was promoted to first lieutenant in 1961. At the end of my active duty obligation in 1963 I entered the Corps of Engineers Reserves, being promoted to captain and later major during my tenure.



**David R. Brown**  
**U.S. Navy, Electrician's Mate**



I served in the Navy starting literally about 36 hours after high school graduation in 1985. After boot camp in Orlando I studied in Millington, Tenn. and Kingsville, Texas before being stationed at Oceana Naval

Air Station in Virginia Beach, VA. I was a member of VF-43, a squadron that used A-4 fighter jets as adversaries in off-shore practice dogfights. I was an aviation electrician's mate working to maintain aircraft electronics and instruments. I received an Honorable Discharge in 1989.



**Bunny Donohue**  
**U.S. Navy, Lieutenant**

I served in the United States Navy Nurse Corps from 1969-1973. I began at the hospital in Portsmouth, Virginia as an ICU nurse. I then served on the USS *Sanctuary* hospital ship in Vietnam where I worked in the Intensive Care Unit 18 hours a day taking care of wounded U.S. soldiers and Vietnamese Nationals that were brought in on helicopters. I then served at the Subic Bay Air Station in the Philippines where I took care of men and women assigned to the base and those arriving on incoming ships. Finally, I served on Parris Island in South Carolina where I took care of Marine recruits and I met my husband who was a Navy doctor. I grew up in a Navy family. My dad served in the Navy for 30 years and both of my parents are buried in Arlington National Cemetery.



**James L. Edge**  
**U.S. Army, Sergeant First Class**



I served in the United States Army 82nd Airborne Division from 1952 to 1955 and for six years as an active reserve. This included

combat action in Hay Street Bars. I grew up in and around Fort Bragg and always planned to be a trooper and earn a GI bill.



**William Bryan Fuller**  
**U.S. Navy, Lieutenant**



After finishing Officer Candidate School, I served as an officer aboard a ship where we replenished the United States Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea. My

main job was performing officer of the deck bridge watches. I served active duty from 1964 through 1967.



**Robert Greer**  
**U.S. Coast Guard Reserve,**  
**Port Securityman Second Class**

I joined the US Coast Guard Reserve in the mid-sixties. I was going to college and worked as a lifeguard at Wrightsville Beach in the summer. We worked closely with the Coast Guard. I was getting close to graduation and the draft was in play. I decided on the Coast Guard rather than be drafted. I stayed in the reserves until September of 1972 when I was honorably discharged with the rank of Port Securityman Second Class.



**Special thanks to:**

- Rotary Veterans Committee – Scott Betz, Matt Mylott, Noah Woods, and David Grandey
- John Meyer for layout and design of this publication
- The club's Board of Directors for approving and financing this project.

**Bill Humphrey**  
**U.S. Army, Corporal**



I served for two years during the Korean War doing cryptography code work under the "for eyes only" classification for



the Army, which was the highest classification they had. I was an S3 corporal and served at a well-secured location.

**Wilbur D. Jones, Jr.**  
**U.S. Navy, Captain**

I was commissioned from Officer Candidate School in 1956. As both a Regular Navy and Navy Reserve officer, I served on six ships in the Pacific and Mediterranean with



a specialty in amphibious warfare. I commanded two Navy Reserve units including an amphibious assault support unit. I served for four and a half years as a captain in the Pentagon and served on the staff of the chief of naval operations as the Navy's weapons systems integrated logistics support coordinator. I retired in 1984 after 28 years of ser-

vice. I served the Department of Defense nearly 41 years as a Navy officer and civilian, including seven and a half years at the Pentagon.



**James Hundley**  
**U.S. Air Force, Major**



After graduating from medical school, I was accepted into the Berry Plan program, which allowed me to enlist in the Air Force but complete my six-year residency training to become an orthopaedic surgeon before going on active duty. I was then assigned to the Carswell Air Force Base Regional Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas, a referral center for spine, hand, and pediatric orthopaedic conditions, and became chairman of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. At that time, the Dallas-Fort Worth area was the second largest military retirement area in the country, and we had the honor of treating many veterans and their families during that time. The Vietnam conflict was winding down, so we saw very few wartime injuries, but we saw plenty of wild, young airmen who crashed their motorcycles and so on. My only airplane-accident patient was a fighter pilot who had to bail out of his jet and broke his leg while maneuvering to avoid a brush fire caused by his crash.

**Russ La Belle**  
**U.S. Army, Sergeant**



I served in the Civil Air Patrol, which prepared me for being drafted into the U.S. Army, where I served from 1962 to 1964. I began in Fort Hood, Texas, doing artillery surveying as an Army MOS 153a. I then served in the 2nd Armored Division. Highlights included amphibious

training and being on the trains headed to Cuba and then turning back around when the Missile Crisis subsided. We were also air-lifted to Germany to perform maneuvers for three weeks to prove to NATO that the Army could deploy a division vs. having to have a permanent presence. Finally, President Kennedy was supposed to review our division on his fateful day in Dallas.



**Howard H. Loving Jr.**  
**U.S. Navy, Captain**



I am a retired United States Navy captain. I served from 1960 to 1990. I served in combat during the Vietnam War from 1971 to 1972 and in the Persian Gulf and North Arabian Sea from 1980 to 1981. During my career I had four tours as a commanding officer. The Navy

provides significant leadership opportunities to young officers serving at sea starting with underway officer of the deck responsibilities in a battle group in unscripted situations. My family's complete support during my four command tours and their willingness to live overseas on four occasions meant the most to me during my career.



**Richard McGraw**  
**U.S. Air Force, Major**



I served in the United States Air Force from 1955 to 1983 both as an enlisted man and as a public affairs officer. I retired from the Air Force

Reserves as a major. I served in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. For me, the service was all about growing up, teamwork and looking out for your brothers-in-arms.

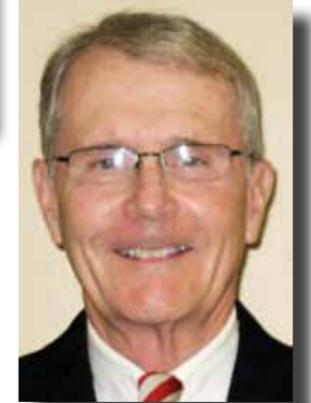


**Bill McMillan**  
**U.S. Air Force, Major**



I served in the Air Force Reserves from 1963 until 1968 and went on active duty from 1968 to 1970. I served as a major in the USAF Medical Corps at Travis Air Force Base in California where I became chief of the Gastroenterology De-

partment at a 400-bed general hospital and a 200-bed casualty staging unit. This experience gave me great insight into what our troops faced in Vietnam. My Air Force experience was very useful throughout my medical career.



**Tom McMillan**  
**U.S. Coast Guard Hospital Corpsman First Class (HM1)**



I served in the U.S. Coast Guard on active duty from 1965 to early 1967. After leaving boot camp at Cape May, N.J., I attended Hospital Corps School at the Great Lakes Naval Base in Illi-

nois. After graduation, I served at the Great Lakes Naval Hospital, then spent time in Cleveland, Ohio and Yorktown, Va. After active duty, I remained in the Coast Guard Reserve for six years, last serving as a hospital corpsman first class (HM1).



**John Meehl**  
**U.S. Air Force, Staff Sergeant**



I served in the Air Force from 1969 to 1972, including two tours in Vietnam and one tour inside Cheyenne Mountain, Colo., tracking

satellites. While in Vietnam, I served in Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) attached to a four-service joint command called Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV). I also served as an adjunct to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon and received a letter of commendation from Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker for my night teaching at the University of Saigon.



**Marcia Morgan**  
**U.S. Army, Colonel**

I enlisted in 1975 and was commissioned as one of the first female ordnance officers in 1976. What was supposed to be a short stint turned into 25 years, after which I eventually retired as a colonel. Along the way,



I commanded units in four different countries (including being the first CSS company commander in the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea) and had two tours at the Pentagon.

**Matt Mylott**  
**U.S. Marine Corps, Captain**



I enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1999 while most the world was still “relatively” peaceful.

I operated as a reconnaissance Marine for a majority of my service years.

My unit was one of the first American elements in Afghanistan, and my battalion led the 2nd Marine Division in the Iraq invasion.

I was most passionate about being accountable for the lives of my brothers, and for fighting tyranny, evil, and interdicting for



those who can't fight for themselves.

I permanently separated from the Marine Corps in 2008.



**Sean Parrish**  
**U.S. Marine Corps, Staff Sergeant**



I served from 2008 to 2017, completing nine-plus years of active duty service on my 30th birthday. I specialized in human intelligence, counterintelligence, intelligence analysis, foreign advisor, security, and combat arms. I was on combat tours in the Middle East and ran around the jungles of Central America. I was fortunate to translate my career skill set directly to the civilian sector. I now work as a consultant in D.C. and complete my education via University of Southern California and Fordham University.



**Nick Rhodes Jr.**  
**U.S. Air Force, Lieutenant Colonel**

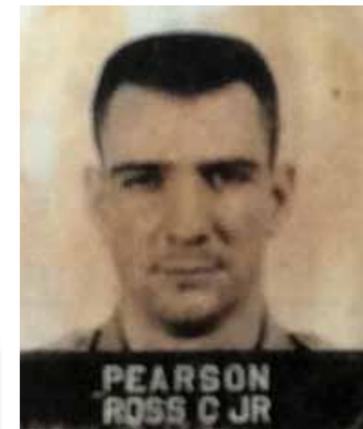


I served in the Air Force from 1966 to 1987. I was commissioned through the ROTC program at N.C.A&T State University. I served on active duty beginning as an aircraft maintenance officer at Chanute AFB in Illinois, Kunsan AFB in South Korea and Norton AFB in California. After completing graduate school, I became an R&D systems acquisition management officer in the satellite communications of-

fice at Hanscom AFB in Massachusetts. I then attended the Air Command Staff College at Maxwell AFB in Alabama before returning to Hanscom AFB as an acquisition and information technology officer in the Space Surveillance System Directorate. I returned to South Korea as director of logistics for the Air Force Military Assistance Group and finished my career at the Pentagon as the program manager for the Saudi Arabian AWACS Procurement.



**Clark Pearson**  
**U.S. Army, First Lieutenant**



I was in the Reserve Officer's Training program (ROTC) at the University of Southern Mississippi from 1954 to 1958. I also joined the Army Reserves in 1956-1957 before graduation. After graduation, I was assigned to active duty

at Ft. Lee, Va., for training, schooling, and assigned as battalion executive officer in 1958 and 1959. After active duty I served in the Army Reserves as a first lieutenant from 1960 to 1967. I am currently a member of Post 10, American Legion.

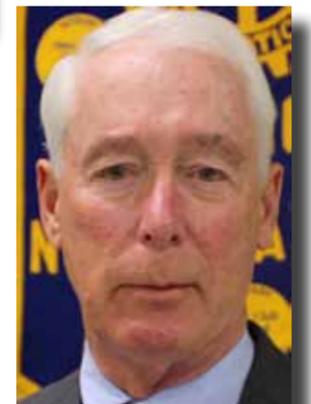


**Robert 'R.B.' Richey**  
**U.S. Navy, Lieutenant**



Following graduation from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1964 and temporary duty as a computer instructor during Plebe Summer at the Academy, I entered the Navy's Nuclear Power Program and became a nuclear submarine officer. I served aboard two ballistic missile submarines and as the senior nuclear ship superintendent at the Charleston

Naval Shipyard. Submarine patrols related to serving as a strategic deterrent during the Cold War with the Soviet Union and shipyard duty involved refueling and retrofitting nuclear submarines. I left the Navy after five years of active duty as a lieutenant, USN, upon concluding that submarine patrols during the Vietnam War were not the best way to raise a family.



**Bill Rose**  
**U.S. Navy, Commander**



Upon graduation from UNC, I entered the Navy Officer Candidate School in Newport, R.I., and received my reserve commission. My first assignment was as gunnery officer aboard USS *Eldorado*, an amphibious flagship out of San Diego. I spent the next two years aboard, most of that time deployed to WESTPAC support-

ing the war in Vietnam. After two years at sea, I asked for a transfer to serve with the River Patrol Forces in Vietnam. I arrived two weeks before the big Tet Offensive in 1968 and saw lots of action then and during the remainder of my tour there. After Vietnam, I entered the Reserves. Alongside my career in banking and active civic life, I ended up staying in the Reserves for twenty years, retiring with the rank of commander.



**Page Teer**  
**U.S. Army, First Lieutenant**



I served two tours with the 11th Cavalry "Black Horse" Regiment in the U.S. Army as a first lieutenant and platoon leader in 1967 and 1968. We were all tanks, probably the toughest, baddest bunch of all. We survived

the worst of the Tet Offensive in Vietnam. One of my jobs was "tunnel ratting" and in my photo I had just set some charges to blow them up. I married my wife Joan two weeks before my first trip.



**Jacob N. Shepherd**  
**U.S. Army Air Force, Captain**



Air Force in Alaska and I was raised in Greensboro which had a large airport.

I was a captain in the Eighth Air Force, which now serves as the Air Force's Global Strike Command. During World War II, I was stationed in England and was a first pilot, flying 27 bombing missions over Germany in a four-engine B-17 bomber named Bottle Baby. I was always interested in flying. I had an uncle who served in the



**Frederick Willetts III**  
**U.S. Coast Guard, Petty Officer Second Class**



In 1969, I did a six-month tour of active duty at Cape May, New Jersey, Yorktown, Virginia and during the Vietnam War on Governors Island in New York where I was involved with the loading of explosives. I then served five more years in the Reserves doing monthly drills and



two weeks of deployment each summer where I was assigned to the Coast Guard Captain of the Port inspecting ships at the Port of Wilmington and served at the Reserve Training Center in Yorktown, Virginia. I was honorably discharged in 1975.

**Julie Wilsey**  
**U.S. Army, Captain**



I was commissioned as an engineer officer directly after graduation from West Point in June,



1992. I served in construction and combat engineer units in Germany, Macedonia and Fort Bragg. I completed service in 1998 as a captain, earning airborne and jumpmaster qualifications.

**Special thanks to:**

- Rotary Veterans Committee – Scott Betz, Matt Mylott, Noah Woods, and David Grandey
- John Meyer for layout and design of this publication

**In memoriam: R. Joe Rogers**  
**U.S. Army, Colonel**

Joe Rogers, a 16-year Rotarian and retired U.S. Army colonel, died August 22 from injuries suffered in an auto accident. He was 93. His wife, Jean Bailey Rogers, 89, had died four days earlier, the result of the same wreck.

Joe joined the club on Aug. 31, 2004, sponsored by the late Bernie Malman.

His military career spanned the closing days of World War II through the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He retired from the Army in 1976.

Joe retired from his second career, in insurance, in 1990. He and Jean, who married in 1954, were nearing their 66th wedding anniversary at the time of their deaths. They had two children and four grandchildren.

This is what Joe said about his military career for the 2019 edition of this Veterans Day tribute:

"I grew up at the Army post in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where my father served in the Army. So it was a natural that I would make the Army a career where



I served from 1945 to 1976. I served as an infantry rifle platoon leader and infantry heavy weapons company commander in the Third Infantry Division in Korea from 1952 to 1953. I served as an aviation battalion commander in

the First Aviation Brigade in Vietnam from 1965 to 1996. I served as chief of staff of the First Aviation Brigade in Vietnam from 1971 to 1972. I retired as a colonel."



# A history of Veterans Day: 1919-2020

World War I—known at the time as “The Great War”—officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles outside the town of Versailles, France. However, fighting ceased seven months earlier when an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, between the Allied nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. For that reason, November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of “the war to end all wars.”

In November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day with the following words: “To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations . . . .”

The original concept for the celebration was for a day observed with parades and public meetings and a brief suspension of business beginning at 11:00 a.m.

The United States Congress officially recognized the end of World War I when it passed a concurrent resolution on June 4, 1926, with these words:

**Whereas** the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and

**Whereas** it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and

**Whereas** the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday:

**Therefore** be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.

An Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U. S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday—a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as “Armistice Day.” Armistice Day was primarily a day set aside to honor veterans of World War I, but in 1954, after World War II had required the greatest mobilization of soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen in the nation’s history; after American forces had fought aggression in Korea, the 83rd Congress, at the urging of the veterans service organizations, amended

the Act of 1938 by striking out the word “Armistice” and inserting in its place the word “Veterans.” With the approval of this legislation (Public Law 380) on June 1, 1954, November 11th became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.

Later that same year, on October 8th, President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first “Veterans Day Proclamation” which stated: “In order to insure proper and widespread observance of this anniversary, all veterans, all veterans’ organizations, and the entire citizenry will wish to join hands in the common purpose. Toward this end, I am designating the Administrator of Veterans’ Affairs as Chairman of a Veterans Day National Committee, which shall include such other persons as the Chairman may select, and which will coordinate at the national level necessary planning for the observance. I am also requesting the heads of all departments and agencies of the Executive branch of the Government to assist the National Committee in every way possible.”

On that same day, President Eisenhower sent a letter to the Honorable Harvey V. Higley, administrator of Veterans’ Affairs (VA), designating him as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee.

In 1958, the White House advised VA’s General Counsel that the 1954 designation of the VA administrator as Chairman of the Veterans Day National Committee applied to all subsequent VA administrators. Since March 1989 when VA was elevated to a cabinet level department, the secretary of Veterans Affairs has served as the committee’s chairman.

The Uniform Holiday Bill (Public Law 90-363 (82 Stat. 250)) was signed on June 28, 1968, and was intended to ensure three-day weekends for Federal employees by celebrating four national holidays on Mondays: Washington’s Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day. It was thought that these extended weekends would encourage travel, recreational and cultural activities and stimulate greater industrial and commercial production. Many states did not agree with this decision and continued to celebrate the holidays on their original dates.

The first Veterans Day under the new law was observed with much confusion on October 25, 1971. It was quite apparent that the commemoration of this day was a matter of historic and patriotic significance to a great number of our citizens, and so on September 20th, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed Public Law 94-97 (89 Stat. 479), which returned the annual observance of Veterans Day to its original date of November 11, beginning in 1978. This action supported the desires of the overwhelming majority of state legislatures, all major veterans service organizations and the American people.

Veterans Day continues to be observed on November 11, regardless of what day of the week on which it falls. The restoration of the observance of Veterans Day to November 11 not only preserves the historical significance of the date, but helps focus attention on the important purpose of Veterans Day: A celebration to honor America’s veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good.

~ SOURCE: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs